

# Collaborating for a Dementia-Friendly Washington: **Inspiring Change**

## Session Descriptions

### KEYNOTE – **Building Dementia-Friendly Communities, Together**

**Meredith Hanley**, MSW. *Project Director, Dementia Friendly America*

In this presentation, Meredith Hanley will give an overview of the dementia-friendly communities movement and ways everyone in a community can get involved. Learn what it means to be dementia-friendly, and why it's so important. Understand the roles that various people and sectors can play. Be inspired by successful efforts across the United States and consider small steps you can take in your own communities to make them more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming to people with dementia and their families.

### Innovation Showcase

In this session, enjoy a snapshot of several innovative programs and projects that help people with memory loss stay active and connected in their communities:

- Frye Art Museum's Creative Aging Programs, *Mary Jane Knecht*
- Puyallup Library's Memory Café, *Debi Rinehart*
- Tai Chi Connections, *Laurelynn Brooks and Joe Liao*
- Greenwood Senior Center's early stage memory loss program and documentary, *Katie Freeman*

### SESSION A – **Becoming Dementia-Friendly: The 4-Step Dementia Friendly America Process**

**Meredith Hanley**, MSW. *Project Director, Dementia Friendly America*

**Mark Haberman**. *Planning and Resource Director, Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington*

**Joel Loiacono**, MPA and Master's Level HCA Certificate. *Regional Director for Eastern Washington & North Idaho, Alzheimer's Association, Washington State Chapter*

Dementia Friendly America provides a structured process for entire cities or regions to become dementia-friendly. In this session, presenters will share in more detail about the four steps of the process, key players to involve, challenges and how to overcome them, and helpful resources. Specific examples from Washington's first dementia-friendly community—Spokane County—will be provided. You'll leave feeling energized and equipped to get started with the Dementia Friendly America process in your community.

### SESSION B – **Raising Dementia Awareness and Challenging Stigma: Two Innovative Approaches**

**Karen M Winston**, MSW. *Planning & Development Specialist II, Aging and Disability Services*

**Michael Woo**, PhD, MSW, LICSW, NHA. *Care Network Director, Kin On Health Care Center*

**Peter Trinh**, *Filmmaker, Director of GAPS*

Raising awareness is a key foundation for any dementia-friendly community effort. In this session, learn more about two innovative approaches being used here in our state: Memory Sunday and the GAPS documentary. Karen Winston will share highlights from her experience leading Memory Sunday, a national effort mobilizing Black churches to provide information on dementia prevention, treatment, research, and caregiving. Michael Woo and Peter Trinh will present the GAPS documentary, a short film Peter produced to address stigma about Alzheimer's in Asian American communities. This session will provide concrete examples of how to build dementia awareness with a focus on cultural sensitivity and understanding.

### SESSION C – **Staying Active, Staying Connected: How to Start an Alzheimer's Café and a Dementia-Friendly Walking Group**

**Cayce Cheairs**. *Dementia-Friendly Recreation Specialist, Seattle Parks and Recreation*

**Cecily Kaplan**. *Senior Programs Director, Phinney Neighborhood Association*

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An Alzheimer's Café—or Memory Café—is a monthly social gathering in a public space like a coffee shop or library. A Dementia-Friendly Walking Group is an opportunity for people with memory loss to build connections while walking together through parks or neighborhoods. Both programs can successfully be offered by senior centers, parks and recreation departments, YMCAs, libraries, faith congregations, or other community groups. In this session, learn all you need to launch these programs in your area—from finding partners and funding, choosing a location, getting the word out, and ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for participants, including considerations for how physical distancing has affected the models.

### **SESSION D – Dementia Friends: Engaging Volunteers to Build Community Understanding**

**Alisa Tirado Strayer**, MSW, MPH.

**Maria Holt**, *Program Director, Dementia Services, Lutheran Community Services Northwest*

In this session, learn more about an international model that mobilizes community volunteers, called Dementia Champions, to deliver basic dementia information sessions in their own social networks. These talks share what it's like to live with dementia, provide tips for communication, and invite participants to commit to a small action to support people with dementia in their community. Piloted in Washington in 2018-2019, Dementia Friends formally launched this year beginning in Pierce County. Hear how it works (including a new virtual format), the impact it has had on attitudes toward people with dementia, and ways you can get involved in bringing this program to your community.

### **SESSION E – Culturally Celebratory Approaches to Dementia-Friendly Programs: Lessons Learned From The Sharp Study**

**Raina Croff**, PhD, *Oregon Health & Science University, Assistant Professor of Neurology, NIA Layton Aging and Alzheimer's Disease Center*

Communities that are truly dementia-friendly must authentically engage with cultural understandings and experiences around what it means to live, and live well, with memory loss or dementia. In this talk, Dr. Croff will share her approach and findings from the SHARP study, in which groups of older Black adults with and without memory loss walked in groups throughout culturally significant neighborhoods and used historical digital images to prompt conversational reminiscence about gentrification, aging and community. Learn more about the positive effects of contextualizing brain health within a culturally celebratory framework, and what it could take to implement programs like the SHARP study in your own communities.

### **SESSION F – Community in Harmony: How to Start a Participatory Music Program for People with Memory Loss**

**Erica Phare-Bergh**, BMus, DipEd, MMus, *Artistic Director, Voices in Motion / University of Victoria*

**Eileen McKenziesullivan**, *Former Executive Director, Senior Services for South Sound*

Music has received increasing attention in recent years for the benefits it can offer people with dementia. It also plays a powerful role in building dementia-friendly communities! In this session, discover how making music together can lift spirits, forge friendships, and raise community awareness. Learn about models for community-based participatory music programs, including Music Mends Minds and the Voices in Motion intergenerational choir based in Victoria, BC. Discover the impact these programs are having and what it takes to start one in your own community.

### **SESSION G – A Whole New (Virtual) World: Creating Connections through Online Dementia-friendly Programs**

**Beth Soltzberg**, LICSW, MBA, *Director, Alzheimer's/Related Disorders Family Support Program, Jewish Family & Children's Service, Boston*

The COVID-19 situation has fostered a new interest in social and creative engagement programs that people with memory loss and their loved ones can participate in from home. These virtual programs—from social meet-ups to dance, singing, and visual arts—have proved useful not only for navigating a global pandemic, but also for creating connections among people who live in rural areas. In this session, Beth Soltzberg will share the nuts and bolts of starting up a virtual Memory Café (or Alzheimer's Café) social program. Learn what platforms are useful, how to overcome technical challenges and maintain privacy, and what kinds of activities work well online—a solid foundation that can apply to any virtual program you are considering for your community.